

# Congresswoman NYDIA M. VELAZQUEZ

Representing New York's 12th Congressional District  
Ranking Democratic Member, House Small Business Committee



## Seniors Deserve Medicare Drug Benefit

Comprehensive solutions needed for prescription drug needs

Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez called on President Bush for a comprehensive Medicare drug benefit last month, arguing that New York seniors are overwhelmed by costs for medicines they need.

"We are in a health care crisis," Congresswoman Velázquez said. "A study I commissioned showed that New York seniors shell out almost 150 percent more than the drug companies' preferred customers."

Ten million older Americans now pay for drugs out of pocket. As the senior population grows and drug treatment expands, Medicare is falling short.

The President's plan requires \$25 for a discount drug card program, and it offers savings of only 10 to 15 percent on costs.

"That doesn't even keep up with price inflation," Congresswoman Velázquez said. Last year drug costs increased 17 percent on average -- after after five years of double-digit growth.



**Congresswoman Velázquez announces her opposition to the President's Medicare drug plan.**

"It's time for a comprehensive drug benefit, so seniors don't bankrupt themselves to stay healthy," Velázquez said.

## Welfare Reform Must Protect Families

Velázquez proposal would drop deadline, allow immigrants to benefit



**Congresswoman Velázquez unveiled her child care initiative at a children's center last month.**

Last month, Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez launched her Invest In Our Children Initiative to protect the smallest, most vulnerable Americans when the programs that benefit them are threatened.

"The single most important thing in determining the future of this nation is our children," Velázquez said. "If we fail to invest in today's young people, we can be sure that tomorrow's adults will not live up to their fullest potential."

One of her priorities is to ensure affordable, quality child care for the nation's most needy families. The President's new welfare plan requires more work from single parent families, but does not expand child care resources to make that possible.

"Every day in New York, 1 out of 4 children lives in poverty and more than 50,000 children are on a waiting list for public child care, Congresswoman Velázquez said. "A first step in helping children is to help their parents by increasing day care funding."

# Ohio Community Helps September 11 Families

## Families of SEIU members lost at WTC receive \$24,000



**Congresswoman Velázquez and Rep. Marcy Kaptur (I) meet families of September 11th victims.**

The Service Employees International Union Local 32B-32J had more than 900 workers at the World Trade Center when it was attacked on September 11. Twenty-four members died. Last month, in a ceremony in New York, Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio) donated the proceeds of her Holiday Spirit Fund to the families of those lost that day.

“After the tragic events of September 11, constituents from Congresswoman Kaptur’s district in Ohio wanted to contribute something to help those affected by the terrorist attacks,” Congresswoman Velázquez said. “Through their generous contributions, the fund grew from a few hundred dollars, to a few thousand dollars, to almost \$25,000.”

Explained Kaptur, “The money collected through the generosity of Northwest Ohioans will help SEIU families who lost a loved one on September 11 to recover.”

# Chinatown Study Shows Broad, Deep Damage

Velázquez attends release of first community-wide survey after Sept. 11

Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez joined community leaders last month to release a new economic survey of Chinatown that examines in detail the lingering, corrosive effects of Sept. 11 on the historic community, and pledged to back its recommendations to speed up recovery.

The report, “Chinatown After September 11<sup>th</sup>: an Economic Impact Study,” was authored by the Asian American Federation of New York. It is the first report of its kind, and its conclusions are sobering. Three months after Sept. 11, almost one-quarter of Chinatown workers remained unemployed, rivaling the jobless rate of the Great Depression. Five months after Sept. 11, 40 garment factories had closed down permanently, and 70 percent of garment workers and one-third of restaurant workers were on reduced schedules.

The report outlines a series of proposals to encourage investment and spur recovery in Chinatown.

Congresswoman Velázquez has already moved on these recommendations with her own legislation, and by calling on Governor George Pataki to appoint a representative from Chinatown to the Lower Manhattan Development Corp. In addition, she worked to funnel \$700 million in federal funds for small business recovery and prevailed on the Small Business Administration to open a Disaster Workshop on Mott St. in Chinatown to help small businesses rebuild.



**Congresswoman Velázquez spoke at the unveiling of the ground-breaking report, Chinatown After September 11<sup>th</sup>.**

## Grants Awarded to Our Community

Education Alliance.....\$123,683 To support the Early Head Start Program	Corporation for Supportive Housing.....\$318,400 To assist HUD grant applicants
ACCION New York.....\$100,000 To support the Sept. 11 “American Dream Fund”	Hamilton-Madison House.....\$20,000 To complete plans for social adult day care